THE AMEN OF THE ROCKS. From The Leisure Hour. The Venerable Bede, with age grown blind, Still went abroad to preach the new evangel, From town to town, village to village, journeyed The saintly elder, with a lad for guide, and preached the word with youthful zeal and fer-

nee the lad led him along a vale, ered o'er with mighty moss-grown boulder thoughtless than malicious, quoth the urchin, More thoughtless than malicious, quoth the nrchin "Here, reverend Father, many men have come, and all the multitude await thy sermon."

The blind old man stood upright at his speech, and spake his text—explained it—thence digressed, Exhorted, warned, reproved, and comforted, so carnestly, that tears of love and joy Randown his cheeks, and on his long gray beard. Then, as was meet, he ended with "Our Father. Think is the kingdom, Thine the power, and Thine The glory is for ever and for ever."

Then cause a thousand, thousand answering voices
"Yes, reverend Father, Amen and Amen."
Then, terrified, the boy fell down repentant,
Concasing to the saint his ill behavior.

Contessing to the same his in behavior.

"Son," said the holy man, "didst thou read never
That stones themselves shall cry if men be silent?
Play thou no more, my son, with things divine,
God's Word is powerful, and cuts more sharp
Than any two-edged sword. And if it be
That man toward the Lord is stony-hearted,
human heart shall wake in stones, and witness."

AN AMBITIOUS WOMAN.

A NOVEL.

BY EDGAR FAWCETT, alleman of Leisure," "A Hopeless Case," etc. XVII.

The gay season had soon set in with full force. It promised to be a season of especial brilliancy. She began to have a little list of her own. The wives of the two gentlemen who had dined with if and husband in Goldwin's company, each sated herself and husband to dine at their own house. The dinners were both of sumptuous quality, and attended by numerous other guests. Claire made a deep impression at both places. Her toi-lettes were rich and of unique taste; she was by far the most beautiful woman at either assemblage. The sudden financial glory of Hollister, whose actual wealth was tripled if not quadrupled by rumor, cast about her exceptional grace, beauty and wit an added halo of distinction. She was the kind of roman whom women like. In not a few of her own sex she quickly roused an enthusiastic parti-

"You are bound to lead, or nothing," Mrs. Diggs seen said to her. "I see this very clearly, Claire,though, for that matter, I have seen it all along." "I mean to lead, or nothing," answered Claire, with her superb candor. "Thus far I have not found

difficult." Mrs. Diggs put up her thin forefinger.

"Tut, tut," she remonstrated. "Don't be confident. Ambition may overleap itself. Remember that you are still on the threshold."
"I've crossed it,' said Claire, laughing.

"No, you haven't, my dear. You have yet

achieved nothing secure, absolute, decisive. Now, I'm not a bit of a snob, myself, as you know. But understand how to reason like one; I can measure the mettle of the foe you've got to fight with. Let us talk plainly together, as we always do. None of the very heavy swells have as yet admitted you. There's no use of denying this. You're being a great deal talked about. You've broken bread dready, and you've received invitations to break more bread, with some very nice, exclusive women. But they are not of the first rank; they're not of the great, proud, select clique. True, Cornelia has called on you, and Sylvia Lee has called. You've returned their visits, and bave seen neither; neither was at home. But then neither is at home except on her visiting-day, and that is customarily written with much legibility on both their cards. both the cards which you received, no day at all was gritten. I've never mentioned this before, have if Well, it never occurred to me until last night. I

was nervous, and couldn't sleep; that dear Manhattan was out at the club, smoking those horrid cigars, which flush his face so and hurt his poor, lear brain, I'm sure. Perhaps it was that which kept me awake and made my mind wander toward you, and reflect upon this peculiarly interesting stage of your career. The little circumstance I have mentioned may mean nothing, but I'm inchied to think otherwise; everything, no matter how invial, about Cornelia, is sure to mean something. But, however this may be, affairs have now reached ss with you. You must make a coup,

"Which you have arranged entirely," said Claire, miling, "I haven't a doubt. And now you await

my sanction of it ?" tive frown. "No, not precisely that, my dear. I haven't yet quite decided what it is to be. But I have almost decided. Suppose that you do not make it at all-that is, not in your own person. Suppose

that I make it for you." "You!" inquired Claire. "Yes. Suppose that I send out cards for a buge

reception, and place your card within the same envelope. Then you would receive at my side, don't you know, and everybody who came must henceforth be on your list as well as on mine. I would hanch you holdly forth, in other words. I would put you under my wing. I would give you my

pet you under my wing. I would give you my machet."

A marked intimacy now existed between Claire and Goldwin. He would often drop in of an evening—sometimes of an afternoon, Hollister was not by any means at home every evening, when he and Claire had no mutual engagement. He was getting to have a good many solitary engagements. "Stag" dinners claimed him; there would be nocturnatively with certain fellow-financiers on the subject of the morrow's chances. Then, too, he had been made a member of the Metropolitan Club, an inmittation oddly hard and in a way oddly easy to enter; it was the one great reigning club of the continent; none other precisely resembled it; the social leaders who did not belong to it were few, and to cross its doorstep at will was the unfutilled dream of many a social struggler.

cler.
Claire cordially liked Goldwin. If he had been obscure she would still have liked I im, though his haportance was so knit in with his personality, he knaed such an atmosphere of pecuniary and parameters. exhaled such an atmosphere of pecuniary and patrician celebrity, that one could ill think of him as ever being or ever having been obscure. She was boldly frank with him regarding her ambitious sims. He would throw back his handsome head and laugh most heartily at lex ingenuous confidences. He would tell her that she was the most exquisite pice in the world, and yet that he was somehow forced to accept her as quite the opposite of one. Ah, yes, intensely opposite." he would add, with a luttered pull at his silken moustache that she selt to be studied in its emotional suggestiveness, with a large sigh that she suspected of being less studied, and with a look in his charming hazel eyes that would nearly always make her avert her own. studied, and with a look in his charming hazel eyes that would nearly always make her avert her own. His homage had become a very substantial fact, and she knew just how much of it the popular standard of wifely discretion would permit her to receive—just how much of it would be her advantage and not her detriment. He was too keen not to have perceived that she had drawn this judicious line of calculation. Now and then he made little semi-boos attempts to overleap it, but at the worst a word could carb him where a glance failed. She team him, all in all, saltatory but never vicious; a sout pall of the rein always brought him to terms. After her converse with Mrs. Diggs, just recorded, he told him of the latter's proposed coap. He looked at her sharply for a moment, and then made a very wry grimace.

she told him of the latter's proposed comp. He looked at her sharply for a moment, and then made a very wry grimace.

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed. "That woman indorse ron! It would be complete ruin."

"Mrs. Diggs is my friend, and as such i must insist apon your always speaking with respect of her in any presence," reprimanded Ciaire, stoutly.

"Respect I why, of course I respect her. Not physically; she's constructed on too painful a plan of agrags. But in all other ways I consider her delightful. Sie's got a big, warm heart in that angular body of hers. She's as liberal as the air. But he isn't good form—she isn't a swell, and no sathly power could make her so. Of course she doesn't think she has really lost casts. She may sell you that she does, but privately she has an immants belief in her ability to play the fine lady at a soment's notice. I don't know any woman more and disapproved of by her own original set. Shall tail you what this idea of hers would result in if fractically carried out? A distinct inquiry to yourself. She has a crowd of queer friends whom he wouldn't slight for the world; she's too contiently good-hearted. She'd invite them all, and hay would all come. Her notable relations—the Horns and Van Cerlears and Amsterdams and inclumacks, and Heaven knows who else—would raws and perhaps shudder when they got the

tickets for her entertainment. They would mostly come, too, and all their grand friends would no doubt follow them. But they would come with a feeling of deadly rancor toward yourself; they would never forgive you for setting her up to it, and nothing could induce them to believe that you had not set her up to it." Here Goldwin crossed his legs with an impatient violence, and stared down at one of his shoes with enough intensity for it to have been concerned in the last caprice of the stockmarket. "Oh, no," he went on, "that would never do. Never in the world. It wouldn't be a comp at all; it would be a monstrous fiasco. Take my advice, now, and politely but firmly nip any such proceeding in the bud."

Claire did. On his own side, Goldwin was secretly determined that she whom he thought the most fascinating, novel and beautiful woman he had ever met, should achieve the full extent of her desires. These desires affected him much as they affected Hollister; they were part of Claire's charm for him; they were like the golden craft of scrollwork that framed the picture; they set it off, and made it more precious; there was a lovely imperiousness about them that would have bored him in another woman, like a kind of ugly greed, but in her were a delight.

He had made up his mind to serve her, brilliantly, canspicuously, and he soon did so. He issued nivitations for a dinner at Delmonico's, and gave it on a scale of splendor that eclipsed all his previous hospitalities. Rare music stole to the guests while they feasted; the board was literally pavilioned in flowers; the wines and the viands were marvels of rarity and cost; beside the plate of each lady lay a fan studded with her monogram in precious stones; during dessert a little cake was served to everybody present, which, when broken, cuntained a ring with either the word bienenu or bienenue embossed in silver along its golden circlet. The host had chosen his guests from among the autocrats and arbiters of fashion. Claire and Hollister were the only persons who did

had been from the first resolved upon the attenuance of Mrs. Ridgeway Lee. He sent no invitatio to Mrs. Van Horn. He knew that Claire suspected

to Mrs. Van Horn. He knew that Ciaire suspected the latter of adverse feelings, and he knew no more than this. But Mrs. Van Horn was not a necessity to the success of his festival; she could easily be replaced by some other leader, and it would be much better not to invite her at all than to invite her without avail. But Mrs. Lee must appear.

He had been prepared for refusal, and it promptly came. On the evening of the day it reached him, he presented himself at Mrs. Lee's residence. He found her alone. She had denied herself to four or five other gentlemen during the previous hour. She had expected Goidwin, though she tried to look decorously surprised when he entered her elegant hittle drawing-room.

expected Goldwin, though she theat to look decorously surprised when he entered her elegant little drawing-room.

She had chosen to clothe herself in black satin, the shimmer of whose tense-drawn faoric about bust and waist, and of its training draperies about the lower portion of her lithe person, gave to her strange beauty an almost startling oddity. An irreverent critic who had recently seen her in this robe, had declared that she made him think of a wet eel. Allowing the comparison to have been apt if ungallant, there is no doubt that she could have suggested only an eel very much humanized, with a face of quite as extraordinary feminine beauty as that possessed by the deadly lady whom Keats so weirdly celebrated.

Her dark, large eyes seemed to night lit with the smoothering fires of fever. The moment Goldwin looked well at her he made up his mind that he was to have a hard time of it. She had undoubtedly guessed the purport of his dinner, and she meant to tell him so, as well, with considerable verbal embellishment.

He pretended, in a playful way, to be dazzled by

bellishment.

He pretended, in a playful way, to be dazzled by her fautastic apparel. He put both hands up to his eyes and rubbed them in a comic imitation of be-

derment. 'I'm not prepared to tell you whether I like it or "I'm not prepared to tell you whether I like it or not," be said, while he sank into one of the big, yielding enairs. "But I consider it splendidly effective. It makes you appear so beautifully slipery. You look as if you could side into an indiscretion and then squirm right out again without being observed by anybody."

Mrs. Lee bit her lip. She had often let him say more saucy things than this to her and not resented them. But to-night her mood held no such tolerance.

"You once promised me," she said, "that you

"You once promised me," she said, "that you would never speak rudely about my personal appearance." She seemed to shape with some difficulty this and the sentences that followed it. "I did not make myself. Perhaps if I had been granted that privilege I might have hit on a type more suited to your taste."

Goidwin strugged his shoulders, "Oh, come." he said, "you've let me chaft you a hundred times before, and treated it as a joke."

He was still seated, while she stoed. He forgot to think this a discourtesy toward her; he would have renembered it as such with almost any other woman; his outward manners were usually blameless; but perhaps he was no more at fault than she herself for the present negligence.

As it was, it did not strike her. She was thinking of other wightier things. A delicate table stood of other wightier things. A delicate table stood near her, and she half turned toward it, breaking from a massive basket of crimson roses one whose rich petals were heavy-folded and perfect, and fixing it in the bosom of her night-dark dress, Goldwin was watching her covertly but keenly, all the while. She seemed to him like an incarnate tempest—he knew her so well. His furrive but sharp gaze saw the tremor in her slim, pale lingers as she dealt with the discoming the contraction of the seemed well. well. His furtive but sharp gaze saw the tremor in her slim, pale lingers as she dealt with the discom-panioned rose.

Finding that she did not answer, he went on:

Finding that she did not answer, he went on:

"You're out of sorts to-night. Has anything gone
wrong during the day ?"

She tossed her head for an instant, and her lip
curied so high that it showed the white edge of her
teeth. But promptly she seemed to decide upon a
mild and not a harsh retort. "I have been at the
hospital most of the afternoon," she said. "I
prayed for an hour beside a poor old woman who
was dying with cancer." She gave a quick, nervous
shudder. "It was horrible." She closed her eyes,
then slowly re-opened them. "Horrible," she repeated, in her most measured way.

"It must have been simply ghastly," observed
Goldwin, with dryness. "For Heaven's sake, why
don't you swear off these debanches of charity for
at least a month or two? They're completely
breaking you up. It's they that put you in these
frightful humors."

She came several steps toward him, and sank into

at least a month or two? They re compressly breaking you up. It's they that put you in these frightful humors."

She came as everal steps toward him, and sank into a chair quite close at his side. She twisted herself so mordinately, in taking this new posture, that her detractors would have decided the whole performance one of her most aggravating affectations. "What frightful humors?" she asked. This question had the same loitering, somnolent intonation that always belonged to her speech, and contrasted so quaintly with her nervous, volatile turns and poses.

Goldwin saw that the time had come. "Ob, you know what I mean," he said. "You went and refused my dinner. Of cours, you didn't mean it." "I did mean it." said Mrs. Lee, very low indeed. "Nonsense. I'm like an enterprising salesman. I won't take no' for an answer."

"I shall give you no other."

He leaned nearer to her. "What on earth is the matter?" he inquired. "I am going to make it a very nice affair. I don't think I've ever done anything quite as pretty as this will be. You used to tell me that no one did these things just as well as I. You used to say that if I ever left vou out at one of my state feasts you'd cut my acquaintance."

She had drooped her small, dark head while he spoke, but now, as he finished, she raised it. Her tones were still low, but unwonted speed was in her words.
"I don't doubt you will make it a very nice affair.

at. Her tones were still low, but unwonted speed was in her words.
"I don't doubt you will make it a very nice affair. But you give it because you want to give distinction to a woman who has bewitched you. Don't deny that Mrs. Hollister will be there. I know it—I am certain of it."
"I don't deny it." said Goldwin, crossing his legartain of it."
"I don't deny it," said Goldwin, crossing his legs letly, "now that you afford me a chance of stat-

He saw her control an inward shiver from dis-

He saw her control an inward savet are playing more overt signs.

"Oh, well," she said, "do not let us discuss the question any more. I sent you my regret to-day. I have another engagement, as I told you."

"Another engagement is easily broken."

"I to a dinner engagement."

"I don't believe you."

"You are grossly rude."

"I know I am. It's perfectly awful. It's the first time I ever insulted a woman. I shall be in the depths of repentance all day to-morrow. I don't know if I shall ever really pardon myself. But....

know if I shall ever really pardon myself. But....
I don't believe you."
He said this with a mournful deliberation that would at any other time have roused her most enjoying laughter; for he had in him the rich fund of true comedy, as many of his friends were wont loudly to attest, and at will he could draw flattering plaudits of mirth from even the gloomiest hearer.
But Mrs. Lee did not show the glimpse of a smile.
"There is no use," she said. "I have given you noy answer. I shall not go. I shall not permit you to make of my name and position a mere idle convenience. I shall not iend you either one or the other, that it may serve your purpose in presenting to society any adventuress who may have pleased your fance."

Goldwin was very angry at this speech.

fancy."

Goldwin was very angry at this speech. She had no idea how angry it had made him, as he quietly rose and faced her.

"What right have you to call her an adventuress?" he asked.

Her eyes flashed as she looked up at him. "Of course she is one. Her husband, too, is an adventurer. They're both trying to push themselves in among the best people. And you are helping them. You are helping him because of her; and you are helping her....well, you are helping her because of herself."

Goldwin was smiling now. She perceived, then

Goldwin was smiling now. She perceived, then, hew very angry he was. She knew his smile so

well that when it came, different from any other "You called upon this adventuress," he said;

"You were wiling to do that."
"Yes—to please you."
"Allow that as your reason. You called on her in private to please me. You will not meet her in public to please me. Is not that just how the case stands."

public to please me. Is not that just how the case stands?"

She fixed her eyes on his face. Her feverish look had grown humid. He could plainly note that her lips trembled. She was so alive, now, to a sense of his being very indignant, that this realization frightened her, and she let him see, with pitiable candor, just how much it frightened her.

"You are in love with Mrs. Hollister," she murmured. "And—she is in love with you."

She showed him the full scope of his power by those few words. He walked toward the door, pausing on its threshold.

"I won't remain to hear you insult a woman whom I respect," he said; "you called her an adventures, which is untrue; you now say something even worse."

"Will you deny it?" she asked, rising.

Her question had a plaintive, querulous ring, which the circumstances made something more than pathetic.

"Will you reconsider your refusal?" he said, make.

than pathetic.
"Will you reconsider your refusal?" he said, mak

"Will you reconsider your refusal?" he said, making the interrogation a reply.

She sank back into her seat again.

"No, never!" she exclaimed.

"Good night," he returned. He went immediately out into the hall, put on his coat and hat, and lett the house.

"She will yield," he told himself. "I am sure of it. She showed me that she would if I were only hard enough. I mean to be hard. I can make it up in kindness by-and-by."

He waited three days. No word came to him from Mrs. Lee. But on the fourth word came to him.

from Mrs. Lee. But on the fourth word came to him.

"I knew it," he thought, as he read her note.

Mrs. Lee went to the dinner in a truly marvellous gown. It was some curious blending of crimson and black silks, that made her look sombrely clad in one attitude and luridly clad in the next. Her only jewelry was a thin soake of rubies about her slender throat, and the head of the soake, set directly beneath her chin, was a big gold one, having two large garnets for eyes. All the women pronounced her costume ridiculously everdone. All the men professed to like it. She never appeared in gayer spirits. Next to Claire she was the most notable feminine guest.

gayer spirits. Next to Claire she was the most notable feminine guest.

But Claire ruled absolute. She had never been more beautiful, perhaps, because she had never felt more secretly and victoriously exultant. The delicious music, the piercing yet tender odor of the lavish flowers, the insidious potency of the wines, which she sipped sparingly and felt dangerously tingle through her voius—all these influences wrought upon her a species of stimulating entbraiment which made the whole splendid banquet seem, on the following day, like some enchanted dream. On one side sat Goldwin, the genins who had created this lovely witchery, urbane, devoted, allegiant; on the other side sat a man of deserved

On one side sat Goldwin, the genius who had created this lovely witchery, urbane, devoted, allegiant; on the other side sat a man of deserved eminence, a wit, a scholar, a statesman. She talked with both companions, and it could not be said that she thea charmed both, for one was aiready her loval devotee. As for the other, though advanced in years and freighted with pungent experiences, he soon taculty admitted that he had at last found, at the most discriminating period of his career, a woman whose graces of intelligence and beauty met in faultless unison. As all the ladies rose, leaving the gentlemen to their coffee and cigars, he leaned toward Goldwin, even before Claire's driperies had sweet the threshold of the dining-room, and significantly murmured:

"You were right. She is an event."

That dinner was the stepping-stone by which Claire mounted into immediate trumph. From that night she was the reigning favorife in just the realm where she had aimed to reage. Her father had died a pauper and been buried as one. She, the mistress of many thousands, having fixedly remembered what a feeble, disappointed, obscure, broken-down man had said to her in early childbood, now stood as the living, actual result of his past counsel. Years ago the seed had been sown in that dingy little basement of One Hundred and Twelfth Sireck. To-day the flower bloomed, rare and beautiful. The little girl had climbed the hill to its top, after all. She had not grown tired and gone home before the top was reached. She had done her father's bidding. She was sure he would be giad if he knew.

"And yet am I quite sure? she would sometimes ask h rself. "Was this what he reality meant when he spoke those words?"

She knew perfectly the folly of the course that she now pursued. Her occasional self-questionings were a hypocrisy that she realized while she indulged it. But they were very occasional, She had slight time for introspection, for analysis of her own acts.

Flattery and devotion literally poured upon in her, like the new wealth t

wn acts. Flattery and devotion literally poured upon in her,

Statery and devotion literally poured upon in her, like the new wealth that continued to pour in upon her husband. The house in Twenty-Eighth Street was soon exchanged for a spacious mansion on Fifth Avenue. Claire ceased to know even the number of her servants. Sae had a housekeeper, who superintended their engagements and discharges. She dwelt in an atmosphere of excessive luxury, and found herself loving it more and more as she yielded to the spell of its subtle enervation.

The season, like her sovereignly, was at its height As the phrase goes, she was asked everywhere. Her bright or caustic sayings were ever on the lips of loyal quoters. Her tolettes were described with journalistic realism in more than a single newspaper. Cards for her entertainments were eagerly sought, and often vainty. Foreigners of distinction drifted into her drawing-rooms as if by a natural process of attraction. She had scarcely a moment of time to herself; when she was not entertaining she was being entertained. Her admirers, women and men, vied in efforts to secure her presence. She had acquired, as if by some magic instinct, the last needed persona, touch; she had got they had rake a getter they moved from the table. The fire is so lovely," said Mrs. still here." She dopped into a chair element was to nay her serone elegance of Claire also seated herself, not fair the most roted beanties of European courts, had nothing but praces to pay her serene elegance of deportment, the undulating grace of her step, the nice melody of her voice, the fine wizardry of her smile. She had never seen Europe, yet she might have spent all the years of her youth on its soil with have spent all the years of her volution has some marked her captivating manner. She was American, past question, to transatiantic eyes, yet these found in her only the original buoyancy and freshness of that nationality, without a gleam of its so-termed

Foes, of course, rose up against her. There can be no sun without shadow. She had made herself so distinct a rarity that cheapening comment coulds not fail to begin its assault. It did so, in hot earnest. Two women had denied their sanction to her sudden popularity. These were Mrs. Van Horn and Mrs. Ridgeway Lee. They were not open enemies; neither, to all appearances, were they covert ones. They were on speaking terms with her. They met her constantly, yet they offered her no deference. Deference was what she now required, and with a widely-admitted right.

The invidious statements that stole into circulation regarding her could not be traced either to the vengeance of Beverley Thurston's sister or the jealousy of Stuart Goldwin's abandoned worshipper. It is possible that the most leal of Claire's defenders in ver thought of so tracing them. But the statements were made, and took wing. She had been a vulgar girl of the people. Her parentage was of the most plebeian sort. A lucky marriage had given her the chance, now accepted and enlarged. Her maiden name had been this, that and the other. Sue was absolutely nobody.

Claire heard none of these scorching comments. She reigned too hanginily for that. Mrs. Diggs heard them and Mrs. Diggs betard them, but Mrs. Diggs betard them, and Mrs. Diggs beard them, and Mrs. Diggs beard them, and Mrs. Diggs beard them, and Mrs.

maiden name had been this, that and the other. Soe was absolutely nobody.

Claire heard none of these scorching comments. She reigned too haughtily for that. Mrs. Diggs heard them, but Mrs. Diggs betrayed no sign of their existence. Goldwin was now devotedly at Claire's side; they were repeatedly seen in public together; the world in which she ruled considered it a spier did subjugation; she had brought the great Wall Street King obsequiously to her feet.

But no breath of slander tainted the relation between them. Claire had been very clever; she had blunted the first arrow, so to speak. She had done so by means of her complete innocence. Goldwin was in love with her; no one doubted this. It was something notable to have said of one. But she was so safely not in love with Goldwin that she could continually, by strokes of frank tact, show the world her own calm recipiency and his entire subservience. A swift yet sure chasm widened between herself and Hollister. The latter had become a man of incessant and imperative engagements. Claire never dreamed of feeling a jealous pang, and yet she knew that her husband, no less than herself, had become a star of fashion. Hollister was assiduously courted. He and Claire would now meet once a day, and sometimes not so often. They had separate apartments; it was so much more convenient for both. The same dinner-engagement frequently claimed them, but on these occasions she would appear in the lower hall to meet him; rusting beneath some new miracle of dressmaking, and they would get into the carriage together and be driven to the appointed place. At the dinner they would be widely separated. He would sit beside some woman glad to have secured him; she would be the companion of some man happy because of her nearness. The dinner would break up; the hour would be somewhat late; they would get into their carriage; Hollister would have an appointment, at the club, or somewhere. He would iet Claire into the great new house with his latch-key. "Good night," he would say, and hurry

Goldwin was always prepared to accompany her. He obeyed her nod.

But Hollister was still her devout subject. It was merely that the sundering stress of circumstances divided them. He did not forget Claire; he postponed her. Everything was in a whirl with 15m, now; he was shooting rapids, so to speak, and by and by he would be in still water again. Fer the present, he had only time to tell himself that Claire was getting on magnificently well. It was like driving four or six restive horses abreast, with his wife seated at his side. He must attend to the skittish brutes, as it were; her safety, no less than his own, depended on his good driving. But she was there at his side; he felt comfortably sure of this fact, though he could not turn and lock at her half often enough.

It was now the middle of January. The weather had been prolific in heavy snew-storms, and the

aloof, and their standing aloof was a perpetual distress."

"Claire, Claire," exclaimed Mrs. Diggs, "you make me wender at you. What was the hostility of these two women, whether open or repressed? You had all the others to pay you court. Why should you have cared? They saw your success. They are powerful, but their power could not keep you from asserting and maintaining yours. I repeat, why should you care?"

"I did care. But it is all over now." She rose to her feet, with a full laugh, as she said these words. "They are coming to my luucheon. They have both accepted. They have acknowledged me. I have forced them to do so."

She uttered that last sentence with a mock ferceness that ended in laughter. But she could not hide from her friend the intense seriousness from which these expressions had sprung.

Before Mrs. Diggs could answer, a servant entered the room by one of the draped doorways leading into the salons beyond. He was not the butler, who had so admirably served them at dinner, but a footman, charged with other special offices. He handed Claire a card, which she read and tossed aside. The next moment she dismissed him by a slight motion of the hand.

"Let me see that card," said Mrs. Diggs. "Has anybody called whom I know?"

Claire was looking straight into the tumbled, lurid logs of the hearth.

"Yes, you know him, of course," she said. "It was only Stuart Goldwin. I am not at home tonight. Not to any one except you, I mean. I gave orders."

A silence ensued. Mrs. Diggs presently made one of her plunges. "Claire, they say that Goldwin is madly in love with you."

She gave a sharp turn of the neck, fixing her eyes on her friend's face. "That is all they say, I hope. They can't say—well, you understand what they can not say."

"That you care for him? Well, no. . . . You have been very discreet. You have arranged wonderfully. Very few women could have done it with the same nicety."

Claire threw back her head, with a haughty, ficeting smile, "Any woman could have done it with the stock-market, can't quicken your pulse by one degree."

She looked steadily at Mrs. Diggs. "I did yet say that I meant that.

sleighing had filled town with its jocund tiukles. One afternoon Claire, leaning back in a commodious sleigh and muffied to the throat in furry robes, stopped at Mrs. Diggs's house, and the two ladies were driven together into the Park. It was a perfect afternoon of its kind. There was no wind; the cold was keen but still; not a hint of thaw showed itself in the banks of powdery snow skirting either edge of the streets, or in those pure, unroughened lapses which clad the spacious Park, beneath the black asperity of winter trees, traced against a sky of steely blueness. Claire was in high spirits; her laugh had a ring as clear as the weather. Mrs. Diggs shivered under the protective wraps of the sleigh. "My circulation was never meant for this sort of thing," she said, at length. "We've gone far enough, haven't we, Claire? It's nearly dark, too."

This was a most glaring fallacy, coined by the desperation of poor Mrs. Diggs's discomfort. But the chilly light was growing a blue gloom above the massed housetops, when the two ladies found themselves at Claire's door.

It had been arranged that they should dine quietly together that evening. Hollister would not be at home, and Claire, for a wonder, would. Mrs. Diggs had been complaining, of late, that she never had a moment of privacy with her friend. Claire had agreed, three days ago, to disappoint for one night all who were seeking her society. "We shall have a cosey dinner," she had said, "of just you and me. We will chat of everything—past, present and future."

nd future."
Mrs. Diggs recalled that word 'cosey,' as she en

the "she said, while seating herself opposite Claire,
"so I see it hasn't quite killed me."
"I think you will survive it," said Claire, with
one of her little musical laughs.
There was not much talk between the two friends

parent relish. She drank a little champagne, which she had poured into a goblet and mixed with water

cution.
"Shail we sit near the fire ?" asked Claire, as to-

Claire rose at this. Her repose was gone; her

said Mrs. Diggs. "Let's

and future."

Mrs. Diggs recalled that word 'cosey,' as sine entered Claire's proud dining-room, with its lofty arched ceiling, where little stars of gold gleamed from dark interspaces between massive rafters of walnut. She cronched on a soft rug beside the deep, large fire-place, in which great logs were blazing. And while she basked in the pleasant glow, her eye wandered about the grave grandeurs of the noble room, scanning its dusky traits of wainscoat, tapestry, tropic plants or costly pictures: for all was in sombre shadow except the reddened hearth and the small central table, on whose white cloth two great clusters of wax lights had been set, stealing their colors from a group of flowers, and its clean sparkle from the glass and silver. The whole table was like a spot of light amout the stately dimness.

"Really, very splendid indeed, Claire," said Mrs. Diggs, in a sort of runinative ellipsis, letting her eye presently rest on the tips of her own upheld ingers, which the firelight had turned into that milky pink that we often see float through opals.

"But I really think I liked the little basement house better, take it all in all."

"Did you?" murmured Claire, who was standing near her, enjoying the warmth but not bathing in it like her halt-frozen friend. "I didn't."

A very impressive butler soon glided into the room, and told Madame in French that she was served. Mrs. Diggs scrambled to her feet; the majesty of the butler had something to do with her speed in performing thus act, though hunger was perhaps concerned in it.

"That dreadint sleigh-ride has left me my apperture the said, while seating herself opposite Claire," so i see it hasn't quite killed me." degree."
She looked steadily at Mrs. Diggs. "I did She looked steadily at Mrs. Diggs. "I did not say that I meant that But I do, if you choose to ask me point blank. We're very good friends. He amuses me. I fancy that I amuse him If I do more, he doean't tell me so. He understands what would happen if he did." She was staring at the fire again. Its lustres played upon the stiken folds of her dress, and made the gold glimmers start and fade in her chestnut hair.

played upon the stiken folds of her dress, and made the gold glimmers start and fade in her chestnut hair.

Mrs. Diggs was not reclining in her chair; she was leaning sideways, with both black eyes riveted on Chaire's half-awerted face.

"Claire" she said, "I'm so awfully glad to hear you say that. It makes me like you better, if such a thing were possible. Upon my word, to be frank, in the most friendly way, I did think there was a little danger, don't you know, of . Well, you've settled all doubts, of course. But then, my dear, you never were enormously fond of Hollister. You let him adore you, don't you know? On, I've seen it all. There's no use in getting angry.

"I'm not angry," said Claire. She was again looking full at her friend. She had put one dainty-booted foot on, the low gilt trellis which rose between the rug and the hearthstone. "We seem to drift upon very unpleasant subjects this evening," she continued. "I am afraid our little intimate reunion is not going to be a success."

"You are angry!" exclaimed Mrs. Diggs, repreachfully. "You've changed, Claire. You're not the same to me as you were before you became a great lady. Now, don't deny it. You feel your cats, as my dear Manhattan would say. You keep me at a distance. You.—"

Here Mrs. Diggs paused, for the same footman who had before appeared now made a second entrance. This time be handed Claire a note.

"Pardon me," said Claire, as she tore open the envelope. Mrs. Diggs watched her while she read the contents of the note. Her perusal took some time. She read the three written pages once, twice, thrice. Her face had grown very grave in the meanwhile.

There was not much talk between the two friends while dinner lasted, and what there was took a descrivery and aimless turn. The butier waited faultiessly; there were eight courses; Claire had said that it would be a very plain dinner, and Mrs. Diggs accretly smiled as she remembered the words. The cooking was perfect; it bad all of what the gourmets would call Parisian sentiment, though no undue richness. Claire ate sparingly, yet with apparent relisb. She drank a little champagne, which she had poured into a goblet and mixed with water.

she had poured into a goblet and mixed with water. There were other wines, but she touched none of them. Mrs. Diggs did, however, sipping three or four, until she lost her chalky wanness of tint and almost got a touch of actual color.

"I never take but one wine, as a rule," she said, "and that's claret. But the sleigh-ride chilled me so to the bone. I begin to feel quite, warm and comfortable, now. Do you always take champagne, Claice?"

thrice. Her face had grown very grave in the mean-while.
Suddenly she crumpled the note in one hand, and flung at into the fire. Her eyes flashed and her lip quivered as she did so.
"For Heaven's sake, Claire," appealed her friend, "what is the matter I I suppose Cornelia or Sylvia. Lee sends a regret for luncheen. You'are so foolish to mind what they do! You recollect what I used to tell you about Cornelia. But why should you mind her airs and caprices now! You are utterly above her—or rather, you have shown her that two can reign in the same kingdom. You could cut her dead with perfect impunity. That's a good deal to say, don't you know, but you positively could!"
"No, no," said Claire, with a clouded face and a

"No, no," said Claire, with a clouded face and a little wave of the hand, "it has nothing to do with either of rhose women. It is... "here she paused, and her breath came quick" "It is from Beverley Thurston." Thurston."
"Beverley!" exclaimed Mrs. Diggs. "Why, he's

fortable, now. Do you always take champagne, Claire?"

"Always. But only a little. It's companionable to touch your lips to, now and then, when you sit through those very long dinners. I suppose the dulness of certain society originally drove me to it. But I am very careful."

"What an air she said that with!' thought Mrs. Diggs. 'And four months ago, at Coney Island, she was unknown, unnoticed.'

The whole repast was exquisite. While it lasted Claire never once speke to the butler. He needed no orders; everything was done as well and as silently as it could be done. In his way he was an irreproachable artist, like the invisible chef below stairs, who had evoked this blameless dinner from the chaos of the uncooked. Just at the end of desert Claire said to her guest:

"Shall you take coffee?" "Oh, dear, no," replied
Mrs. Diggs, "I don't even dare. I'm nervous
enough as it is."

But Claire had coffee, black as ink, and served to But Claire had coffee, black as ink, and served to her in a tiny cup, as thin as a rose-leaf. Presently the two friends became aware that they were alone. The butler had gone without seeming to go. Like a mysterious as revoir, he had left behind him two crystal finger-bowls, with a slim slice of lemon floating in each. Claire had finished her coffee. She rose and leaned toward the flowers in the centre of the table. As her fingers played among them they seemed to break, aimest of their own accord, into two separate bunches. She went round to Mrs. Diggs and gave her one of these, retaining the other. Presently each had made for herself an imprompting corsage. Mrs. Diggs had not spoken for several minutes; she had indeed been abnormally quiet ever since the butler's departure. The calm, gracettil spiender of it all had awed her. It had such a thrish, such a choiceness, such a gentle dignity of exe-

very much, and would always stay her stane friend, no matter what bitter ill might overtak her.

[To be Continued.] FIRES AND THE WEATHER. A STUDY OF METEOROLOGICAL INVLUENCES ON

FIRE-LOSSES. Authentic records of the losses by fire over large areas of country and for long periods of time afford abundant proof that peculiarities of climate and weather exert an appreciable influence on the frequency and destructiveness of fires. A reporter for The Tribune, having looked up this subject recently, has found the interdependence between the weather and the fire-loss an interesting study. There is considerable difficulty in an interesting study. There is considerable dufficulty in gathering, for purpose of comparison, trustworthy figures of fire-losses and meteorological data for the same area and period. Indeed, respecting the former there are no estimates of the general fire-loss by States and Territories except those given in the fire-tables published by The Chronicle, an insurance newspaper of this

getter they moved from the case.

Prefer one of the drawing-rooms?

"The fire is so lovely." said Mrs. Diggs. "Let's sit here." She dropped into a chair as she spoke. Claire also seated herself, not far from the fire, though a little distance away from her friend.

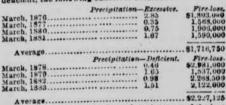
Suddenly the flood-gates of Mrs. Diggs's enthusiasm burst open. She had considerable silence to make up for. "Oh, Claire," she exclaimed. "Its just perfect! I don't see how you do it! I don't see where on earth you got the experience from! If I had seven times your money I couldn't begin to have my household machinery move in this delightful, well-oiled way. My servants would steal; my chef would get drunk; my magnificence would all go, awry; I'm sure it would!"

Claire laughed. "I'm very composed about it all," she said. "I keep quite cool. I like it, too. There is a great deal in that. I don't mean managements on much as the superintendence of others' management. I'm a sort of born overseer."

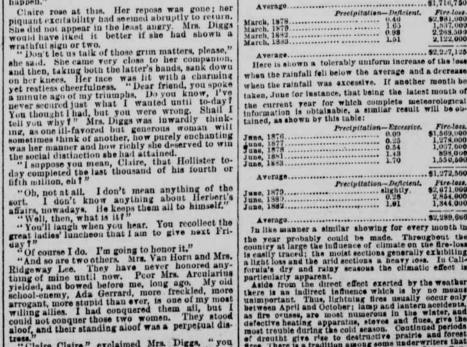
"You're a born leader." Mrs. Diggs was looking at her very attentively, now. "And how capably you are leading! How you've carried your point, Claire! I observe you, and absolutely marvel! I can't realize that you are really and truly my Coney Island Claire, don't you know? You've snot up so. You're so mighty. It's like a dream."

"It's a very pleasant dream."
She said this archly and mirthfully. But Mrs. Diggs on a sudden became solemn.

"Claire," she went on. "you remember what I told you in our little confab, the other day, at the Lauderdales' reception? It's time, my dear, You're like a person at a gambling-table, who begins to play for pastime and ends by playing for greed. You know I dote on you, and you know I never choose my words when I'm in downright carnest. Your love for pomp and luxury, my dear, is becoming a vice. Yes, an actual vice. You don't take your trumphs moderately, as you do your champagne-and-water. You drink deep of them, and let them fly to your lead. Oh, I can see it well enough. And I tremble for you. I tremble, Claire, because . "" is the close relation existing between the rainfall of a section and its fire-loss. This interdependence will be sufficiently indicated by one or two illustrations. Take the month of March, which is noted for meteorological variability, and compare the fire-loss during that month for a series of years in one section, say the Middle Atlantic States—New-York, New-Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia. Dividing the months into two classes, those in which the precipitation was in excess of the average and those in which it was deficient, the following exhibit is obtained :



when the rainfall feli below the average and a decrease when the rainfall was excessive. If another month be taken, June for instance, that being the latest month of the current year for which complete meteorological information is obtainable, a similar result will be ob-tained, as shown by this table:



In like manner a similar showing for every month in

In like manner a similar showing for every month in the year probably could be made. Throughout the country at large the influence of climate on the fire-loss is easily traced; the moist sections generally exhibiting a light loss and the arid sections a heavy loss. In California's dry and rainy seasons the climatic effect in particularly apparent.

Aside from the direct effect exerted by the weather there is an indirect influence which is by no means unimportant. Thus, lightning fires usually occur only between April and October; lamp and lantern accidents, as fire occuses, are most numerous in the wister, and defective heating apparents, stoves and flues, give the most trouble during the cold season. Continued periods of drouth give rise to destructive prairie and forest fires. There is a tradition among some underwriters that large snow-storms are succeeded by heavy fires. Generally the influence of the weather can be observed only in the aggregate fire-loss for a long period, although cocasionally this influence is marked in the cases of individual fires—fleur mill fires especially. If the day is het and dry, as pointed out by the late Professor Tobis, of Louisville, there is likely to be an expission of cereal dust, whereas if the fire happens in a cool and humid day the danger of an expission is almost entirely removed. As a rule, it may be stated that, all other things being equal, a damp atmosphere teads to make combustion slow and lessen the exposure-hazard, while dry weather has an opposite effect.

OLD AND NEW MILFORD.

A FAMOUS PENNSYLVANIA TOWN.

CORNELIUS THE GIANT-WILLIAM BROSS AND OTHER CELEBRITIES-THE MODERN RESORT.

M AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE. MILFORD, Penn., Aug. 30 .- The Delaware Valley, from the Water Gap to Harcock, N. Y., a distance of over 100 miles, is now an almost continuous summer resort, although it is only a few years since a city boarder." was unknown at any point fartner up the valley than Milford, and a rarity between here and the Water Gap. Milford has been a popular summer resort for many years. The pioneer city visitor to the resort for many years. The pioneer city visitor to the place was allen Cuthbert, a prominent merchant of Philadelphia, who came here with his wife fifty-four years ago this summer. The venerable couple have spent their summers here every year but one since, and that year—1874—they were in Europe. They are bere this season at the Sawkill House, the hotel they selected on their first visit, and which they have invariably made their quarters. There were no railroads then, and Milford was one of the main stopping piaces for coaches on the turnpike which was the principal thoroughfare between New-York City and the "lake country."

THERE WERE GIANTS IN THOSE DAYS. The Nawkill was then only a village tavern, and was kept by a remarkable man named Lewis Cornellus, who at the time of his death in 1841 must have sheen the heaviest person in the country. The following is a copy of a certified entry in one of the books of record in the

of a certified entry in one of the books of record in the clerk's office of this county, the original entry having been made immediately after Mr. Cornelius's death:
Lewis Cornelius—Died September 27, 1841.
His height was 6 leet.
Circumference below the waist, 8 feet 2 inches.
Circumference below the waist, 6 feet 2 inches.
Circumference of arm below the elbow, 2 feet 2 inches.
Circumference of arm below the elbow, 2 feet 2 inches.
Circumference of wrist, 1 foot 3 inches.
Circumference of wrist, 1 foot 3 inches.
Circumference of and left, 4 feet 2 inches.
Circumference of and, 1 foot 7 inches.
Circumference of and, 1 foot 7 inches.
His weight was 645½ pounds, without clothing.
During his lifetime Mr. Cornelius would not consent to be weighed. The above was his weight after death, and after a long filiness, during which he had lost much

and after a long illness, during which he had lost much flesh. Mr. Cornelius was survived by a wife and seven children, three sons and four daughters. The manage-ment of the hotel has never passed out of the hands of the family. The wife, the three sons and one daughter are dead, and the house is now managed by the remain-ing daughter. Two of the sons weighed over 300 pounds each at the time of their death, and the deceased daughter weighed over 400. One son, who died two years ago, had been Sheriff of the county five times. From the time of the elder Cornelius until now the fame of the Sawkill House has been wide for the excellence of its table. It has been patronized by Joseph Jefferson, Samuel Randall, George H. Boker, members of the Drexel family, and many others celebrated in politics and the professions.

and the professions.

SOME OF THE PIONEERS.

At the time Allen Cutabert discovered Milford it was a quaint, old-fashioned village, but of much more importance in a business way than it can boast of being now.

James Wallace, father of the late Francis B. Wallace, the well known Wall Street broker, kept a small country store here, and Cyril C. D. Pinchot, father of James W. Pinchot, of New-York, now a leading and wealthy pa-tron of art in that city, was a clerk in his father's still smaller store, in an old frame building in the village.

Deacon Moses Bross kept a raftsman's tavern on the
banks of the Delaware. The Deacon had a son William, among a host of other children. It was among the du-ties of William to row a boat out on the river when rafts were running, and to peddle gin, apple-lack, hard-boiled eggs and pie to the raftsmen. One day he boarded a raft piloted by George Bash, a ploneer temperance advocate. Learning the lad's name, Bush said to him that he was altogether too fine and bright-looking a boy to be selling liquor, and advised him to quit it, study, and he might be a Governor some day. William was so lmpressed with the advice of the pilot that he went home and told his father that he would sell gin no longer. There was a printing office in Milford at that early day. Young Bross went to work in it as "devil" and learned the printer's trade. Subsequently he went to Chicago, then but a struggling village. The words of George

Thurston."

"Beverley!" exclaimed Mrs. Diggs. "Wby, he's in Europe."

"He got back yesterday. He has learned about me. I suppose his sister has told him. And he writes to me in a tone of impertinence. Yes, it's nothing else. He writes to me as if I were some simul creature. He presumes to be sorry for me. He says that he will pay me a visit if I can spare him an hour from the guidy life I am leading. ... I don't remember the exact words he uses; it is not so much what he writes as what he seems to write. The whole note breathes of patronage and commiscration. To me!—think of it! What right has he! What right did I ever give him?"

Mrs. Diggs started up from her chair. "Why, my dear Claire, 'she said, "you are greatly excited!"

"I am unserable!" cried Claire. She almost staggered toward Mrs. Diggs, and flung both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable both arms about her friend's neck. "I am miserable of for years a leader in the Democratic nomines for president, at that time an equivalent to election; Henry S. Mott, for years a leader in the Democratic nomines for pressioner in 1874 over George Darey, by 200,000 majority, and was the last President of the Sacretly knew what to think. She only felt, at that unexpected moment, that she loved Claire incapable of further speech. Mrs. Diggs let the clinging arms clean her. She did not know what to answer; she scarcely knew what to think. She only felt, at that unexpected moment, that she loved Claire of your whole and the printer's trade. Subsequently he works and the Pennsylvania for Jensel. "The McDend of

But the Milford of to-day is a far different affair from the Milford of fifty years ago. The descendants of the old families are here in abundance, to be sure, and retain the traditious of their fathers. Marriage and intermarriage have made the whole community, almost, akin, and the stranger needs have a care how he remarks to one native some peculiarity he may have observed in another. It may be No. One's sister or his cousin or his another. It may be No. One's sister or his cousin or his aunt. But with the aesthetic atmosphere of the place there is now inlugied much that is very perceptibly utilitarian; and alien blood, with little knowledge of past traditions of the place and less care for them, is rapidly wiping them out and removing all that may remind coming generations that they ever existed. True, the old Court House—the oldest but one in the State, having been built in 1812—stands unchanged as to appearance, a quaint many-hued stone structure of the angular, unmeaning local architecture of seventy years ago. But it is a court house no longer, for it was abandoned ten years ago for a more modern and pretentious structure, and the building which has echoed with the eloquence of the great lawyers of a past era-the Jessups, the Reeders, the Porters, the Woodwards and hosts of others-is now handed over to the county as the common jail. The old-fashioned homesteads have been re-placed by "residences" of modern architecture and pretentious surroundings. The village houses are no

mon jail. The old-fashloned homesteads have been replaced by "residences" of modern architecture and pretenticus surroundings. The village houses are no longer houses but "cottages." The modest taverns whose swinging signs once announced "Entertainment for man and beast," are now commodious "hotels" where entertainment for the casual man and beast, in the summer time at least, depends in a great measure on how much space the city boarders occupy.

That the average city boarder has good sense is shown by the fact that he is always on haad in the fullest possible force, in Milford, from early in the season until late. Its twelve large and excellent hotels and numerous boarding-houses are at present crowded with the best recopte of New-York, Brooklyn and Pulladelphla. Milford is reached from New-York by the Eric Railway to Fort Jervis, a three-hours' ride. A drive of seven miles from Port Jervis—for the clamor of no railroad has ever yet profaned these quiet precincts—over a road as hard as cement and wonderfully smooth, running along the base of a lofty and precipitous range of mountsins, crowned with high, perpendicular clifs of slate rock, brings the visitor to Milford. The attractions of this resort are, first, its charming location; second, the grand work nature has done sround it; third, its dishing and hunting grounds; fourth, the general excellence of the hotels and boarding-houses. Milford lies on a broad plateau, two hundred feet above the Delaware siver, and about one thousand feet above tide. It commands a view up the valley that is indescribably beautiful, taxing in the mountains, view, plains and forests of three States, the Delaware winding through the landscape, and visible for miles. High hills surround the vilage on three sides, over which shaded roads lead to the many interesting points in the vicinity. If the site of Milford had been selected especially for a sanitarium, a better choice could not have been made. The surround the vilage on threating for some didstance at the bottom of a rooky ga